There’s power in partnerships. This summer, Peoria Public Library joined with nearly 30 other local organizations to host a special Slide into Summer Reading party at Owens Recreation Center. The kick-off party, coordinated by Align Peoria, featured games, goodie bags, free books and food, a visit from PBS’ Daniel Tiger and, of course, the opportunity to sign up for our Summer Reading program.

Nearly 350 people signed up for Summer Reading during that two-hour party.

“This was such a great way to get kids excited about Summer Reading,” said Alyce Jackson, Manager of Programming for Peoria Public Library. “The buzz and exposure to partners like Peoria Public Schools, Common Place, Early Head Start and Tri-County Urban League, just to name a few, is no doubt part of why our participation is up double digits this year. We’ve already been talking about when, not if, we do this again.”

Overall, Summer Reading participation is up 18 percent in 2019 compared to 2018, with more than 3,500 people of all ages agreeing to read at least 20 minutes a day from June 2 through July 20.

“During the school year, students often don’t have a choice about what they read. In the summer, we want them to reawaken their imagination by reading what they like,” said Peoria Public Library Executive Director Randall Yelverton. “But there’s also a practical reason to sign up for Summer Reading. Reading over the summer prevents the ‘summer slide’ or loss of reading skills.”

Researchers also believe the summer slide is cumulative, with struggling readers two years behind peers by the time they reach middle school, according to studies noted in the latest Scholastic Kids & Family Reading Report. Awareness of the summer slide continues to increase, according to the report, from 48 percent of parents aware to 53 percent, but that hasn’t necessarily translated into more readers.

“Thirty-two percent of kids ages 15-17 said the number of books they read over the summer was zero, up sharply since 2016 (22%),” the report states. And it was double for kids ages 9-11. In 2016, 7 percent of them said they didn’t read any books over the summer. In 2018, it was 14 percent.

“The children in our Summer Reading program enjoy it so much. You can tell it’s not something they see as a chore,” Yelverton said. “We just have to keep working to get the word out and, of course, remind parents that they can do Summer Reading too. Children are great mimickers.”

In addition to a new kick-off party, Peoria Public Library also hosted a Summer Reading party just for adults this year. The party featured live music, food trucks, indoor and outdoor...
Enjoy these mystery titles appearing soon on at your favorite branch!

**Auntie Poldi and the Vineyards of Etna** by Mario Giordano: Prosecco-loving Auntie Poldi is ready for some peace and quiet, interrupted by romantic encounters with handsome Chief Inspector Montana. Then she finds a body in a vineyard, tangles with the Mafia, and yet again makes herself unpopular in the pursuit of justice. But once wine and murder mix, how could she possibly stay away? (Lakeview, Lincoln, Main and North)

**Death by Dumpling** by Vivien Chien: A Noodle Shop Mystery. After a brutal break-up and a workplace walk-out, Lana Lee is waiting tables at her family's Ho-Lee Noodle House. But she becomes yesterday's news when the property manager turns up dead after a delivery of shrimp dumplings from Ho-Lee. (Lakeview, Main, McClure and North)

**Read and Ride: A Tradition**

Rewind 20 years ago when Cynthia Smith was a new children's librarian at Lincoln Branch Library.

"It was so quiet. You could count on one hand how many kids came in the building [for Summer Reading]," Smith said.

If the kids wouldn't come to her, Smith was determined to go to them. "I decided I was going to go to the schools, and I was going to take a bike," for them to win. She bought the first bike. She recalls it was a shiny red boy's bike.

"I went classroom to classroom, and they were so excited. It just snowballed from there."

Today, 20 years later, Smith oversees the entire Lincoln Branch. Her Summer Reading program has blossomed into nearly 500 children (0-18) taking part this summer, and nearly 650 if you add in the adults. And bikes are still a big part of the draw.

The Lincoln Branch, which opened in 1911 thanks to a $20,000 gift from Andrew Carnegie, mainly serves the South Side of Peoria, which has higher rates of poverty and crime than some parts of Peoria. Transportation to the annual, all-ages Summer Reading party at the Peoria Riverfront Museum is a problem for many of the children who participate in Summer Reading at Lincoln Branch. So, Smith's bike giveaway is their main celebration.

"In a way, it is, because of the transportation issue, but I always encourage them to go to the museum party."

Not every child will get a bike, but Smith does her best to secure as many as she can through other non-profits, businesses and individuals. Last year, 77 brand-new, gleaming bikes were given away to Summer Readers through random drawings.

"I always invite (the donors) to come and pull names," Smith said. "When they see how many kids are here and how excited they are, they usually say, 'We need to give more.'"

When bike giveaway day comes, every inch of the library is taken up with children and bicycles. There is not a bit of peace and quiet. Smith's days as a lonely children's librarian are, happily, long gone.

"It gets crazy. It's going to be loud. And that's how we like it."

**What’s New in Large Print**

**BY TERI MILLER**

Enjoy these mystery titles appearing soon on at your favorite branch!

**Auntie Poldi and the Vineyards of Etna** by Mario Giordano: Prosecco-loving Auntie Poldi is ready for some peace and quiet, interrupted by romantic encounters with handsome Chief Inspector Montana. Then she finds a body in a vineyard, tangles with the Mafia, and yet again makes herself unpopular in the pursuit of justice. But once wine and murder mix, how could she possibly stay away? (Lakeview, Lincoln, Main and North)

**Death by Dumpling** by Vivien Chien: A Noodle Shop Mystery. After a brutal break-up and a workplace walk-out, Lana Lee is waiting tables at her family's Ho-Lee Noodle House. But she becomes yesterday's news when the property manager turns up dead after a delivery of shrimp dumplings from Ho-Lee. (Lakeview, Main, McClure and North)
August ALL LOCATIONS

1000 Books Before Kindergarten
Read any 1,000 books to your child before they enter kindergarten and earn prizes for every 100 books they read. Once your child reads 1,000 books, they will be invited to a graduation party.

August LAKEVIEW BRANCH & MCCLURE BRANCH
Reading Challenges
Select the challenges that you want to take part in during 2019. For each challenge you complete, feel free to bring in a copy to receive a bookmark and an entry into a drawing for a $25 Barnes and Noble gift card.

August LAKEVIEW BRANCH
One-On-One Resume Writing Assistance Program
Do you have a copy of your resume on hand and need someone to look over it? Or are you having a hard time writing your resume? Please call Fran at 309-497-2200 to schedule a one hour session to help you with your resume.

August MCCLURE BRANCH
National Dog Day Photo Contest
Celebrate National Dog Day (August 26) all month! Bring a photo of your dog before voting begins to enter them in the photo contest. Voting will run from August 19 to 30, with the most popular pup earning a $20 Petsmart gift card.

August MAIN LIBRARY
Crafts-to-Go – 9:00 am-6:00 pm
Kids ages 5 through 12 can pick up a craft packet at the 1st Floor Information Desk any time we’re open. Ask for a Craft-to-Go, take it home and the fun begins.

Thursday, August 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
MCCLURE BRANCH
Fun Time Storytime – 10:00-10:30 am
Ages 3 to 6.

Friday, August 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30
NORTH BRANCH
Busy Bees Storytime – 10:30-11:00 am
Children of all ages.

Friday, August 2
LAKEVIEW BRANCH
Drop In: LEGO Builders Club– 3:00-5:00 pm
Calling all LEGO fans! Drop in any time to play. Parental supervision is required.

Saturday, August 3, 10, 17, 24, 31
NORTH BRANCH
Busier Bees Storytime – 10:30-11:00 am
Children of all ages.

Saturday, August 3
MCCLURE BRANCH
National Watermelon Day–11:00am-12:00pm
A tasty treat and fun craft are the perfect way to celebrate National Watermelon Day! All ages welcome.

Sunday, August 4
LAKEVIEW BRANCH
The DNA Discussion – 12:00-1:15 pm
Take this opportunity to learn about how technology and the future is a driving force in uncovering more about the past. Find out about the various top companies and the differences in their testing structures and reports. Hear more about what you can do with your results. Discover more about YOU.

Monday, August 5, 12, 19 & 26
NORTH BRANCH – 10:30-11:00 AM
Wednesday, August 7, 14, 21, 28
LAKEVIEW BRANCH – 10:15-10:45 AM
Tiny Tots Storytime
Ages 12 to 23 months.

Monday, August 5
LAKEVIEW BRANCH
Moana Boat Challenge – 4:00-5:00 pm
Moana and HeiHei are on a quest to find Maui and return the heart of Te Fiti, but they need your help building a boat that will take them safely across the ocean. We provide the materials, you provide the imagination! Ages 5 to 10.
**AUGUST CALENDAR**

**Monday, August 5**
NORTH BRANCH

*Learn Something at the Library: Painting – 6:00-7:30 pm*
If you enjoyed watching *The Joy of Painting*, come join us for an evening of paint-along fun! Canvases, brushes and paint will be provided. Ages 18 and up. Register by calling 309-497-2150.

**Tuesday, August 6 & 20**
LINCOLN BRANCH

*Terrific Tattletale Storytime – 10:00-10:30 am*
Ages 3 to 6.

**Tuesday, August 6, 13, 20 & 27**
LAKEVIEW BRANCH

*Toddler Tales – 10:15-10:45 am*
Ages 2 to 4.

**Tuesday, August 6**
MCCLURE BRANCH

*Decorate a Notebook – 11:00 am-12:00 pm*
Add some flair to your school supplies by decorating your own notebook to get you ready to go back to school! While supplies last. Ages 5 to 10.

**Tuesday, August 6**
LAKEVIEW BRANCH

*Bibliophiles Book Club – 1:30-2:30 pm*
This month: *The Soul of America: The Battle for Our Better Angels* by Jon Meacham

**Tuesday, August 6**
LAKEVIEW BRANCH

*Board in the Library – 6:00-7:45 pm*
Bring a friend or meet a new friend while playing a board or card game. Select one from our collection or feel free to bring one of your own. Soft drinks will be available. Ages 18 and up.

**Wednesday, August 7**
NORTH BRANCH

*Brainy Baby Storytime – 1:30-2:00 pm*
Develop your baby’s pre-literacy skills with books, songs, rhymes and finger plays that will help them understand new concepts and enhance their love of learning. Caregivers will be encouraged to engage their child through one-on-one interactions, making reading time fun. Age 0 to 23 months.

**Wednesday, August 7**
LAKEVIEW BRANCH

*Tie Dye at the Library – 2:00-3:00 pm*
Come create your own tie dye shirt with us! Bring your own shirt to dye (white shirts work best). Be sure to wear clothes you’re willing to get messy. Grades 1 to 6. Parental supervision required.

**Wednesday, August 7**
LAKEVIEW BRANCH

*Tie Dye at the Library – 4:00-5:00 pm*
Come create your own tie dye shirt with us! Bring your own shirt to dye (white shirts work best). Be sure to wear clothes you’re willing to get messy. Grades 7 to 12.

**Wednesday, August 7**
NORTH BRANCH

*STEAM Explorations – 4:30-5:30 pm*
Discover the Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math topics that are all around us! This month we will be exploring inventions. Ages 6 to 11.

**Wednesday, August 7**
NORTH BRANCH

*1000 Books Before Kindergarten Kickoff – 6:30-7:30 pm*
According to the National Education Association, reading with young children is one of the crucial components to becoming a good reader! The best way to make your child a reader is to read to them. Join in the fun at our annual kickoff party as we discuss the importance of nurturing literacy while enjoying a healthy snack, easy crafts and games, and, of course, reading a story to give your child their first book to add to their reading log towards their goal of 1,000! If your little one is already signed up for the program, but didn’t get the chance to attend a kickoff, please still join in on the fun of this annual event!

**Thursday, August 8 & Tuesday, August 13**
LINCOLN BRANCH

*Puppet Show: “Back to School Blues” – 10:00-10:30 am*
Help the little girl get a good feeling about going back to school! Ages 3 to 6 years old.

**Friday, August 9**
NORTH BRANCH

*Favorite Books Drawing – 2:00-3:00 pm*
It’s Book Lovers Day! Celebrate by coming to the library and learning how to draw a shelf full of your favorite books! Ages 5 to 12.

**Friday, August 9**
MCCLURE BRANCH

*Origami Bookmarks – 3:00-4:00 pm*
Create a one of a kind bookmark to keep your place while reading on Book Lovers Day! Ages 13 to 18.

**Saturday, August 10**
MCCLURE BRANCH

*Scrumptious Science: Solar S’mores Oven – 11:00 am-12:00 pm*
Celebrate National S’mores Day with another scrumptious science experience! We’ll engineer a solar oven to toast our s’mores with the heat of the sun. Ages 11 to 18.

**Saturday, August 10**
MCCLURE BRANCH

*You-Pick Flick – 3:00-5:00 pm*
You picked it, now we’re playing it! Every second Saturday, you can enjoy the You-Pick Flick for the month. Be sure to cast your vote for next month’s movie while you’re here! Voting is open all month.

**Sunday, August 11**
LAKEVIEW BRANCH

*Sensory Friendly Family Film – 2:00-4:00pm*
Join us for this sensory friendly showing of *Kubo and the Two Strings*. The room will be lighter, the volume will be lower, and audience members will be welcome to move around, talk, and sing. The intended audience is children with special needs accompanied by siblings and caregivers, although everyone is welcome to attend. Noise canceling ear muffs and fidgets will be supplied. Rated PG

**Sunday, August 11**
NORTH BRANCH

*Biography and Nonfiction Book Club – 3:00-4:30 pm*
This month: *Perfect Weapon: War, Sabotage, and Fear in the Cyber Age* by David Sanger
Monday, Aug. 12—LAKEVIEW BRANCH
A Novel Naptime – 10:00-11:00 am
Each month we'll read a different title and have a light book club discussion. While the adults discuss the book, children can play with toys, color, and read from board books. Visit one or both of the sessions! Please call 309-497-2200 or 309-497-2700 for questions or help placing the book on hold. This month's title: Where'd You Go Bernadette by Maria Semple.

Monday, August 12
MCCLURE BRANCH
The Book Was First Movie Series – 10:30 am-1:00 pm
Join in a viewing of the 2008 film The Boy in the Striped Pajamas based on the book by John Boyne. Read the book before you come or just enjoy a movie and light refreshments!

Monday, August 12
NORTH BRANCH
Atlantic Monthly Discussion Group – 11:00 am-1:00 pm
Just read the feature article (and any other articles that interest you) of the current issue of Atlantic Monthly in print or on the website, theatlantic.com/magazine/. Then engage in lively and intellectual discussion. Facilitators are Marge Semmens and Catriona Ritenhouse.

Monday, August 12
NORTH BRANCH
Preschool Art Playdate – 2:00-2:30 pm
Little artists can create a masterpiece and listen to a story. Please dress for a mess. Ages 3 to 6.

Monday, August 12
LAKEVIEW BRANCH
Sci Fi & Fantasy Book Club – 6:30-7:30 pm
This month: The Strange Case of the Alchemist's Daughter by Theodora Goss

Tuesday, August 13
LAKEVIEW BRANCH
Exploring Nature: Bacteria – 4:00-5:00 pm
Learn about the bacteria living in our environment when we take to the outdoors to collect cultures of different organisms to grow our own bacteria. Ages 5 to 10.

Tuesday, August 13
LINCOLN BRANCH
Front & Center: Adult Bored (Board) Game Night – 6:00-7:30 pm
Calling all adults! Join us for an evening of fun playing games. Try your hand at Uno, a little Taboo, and Disturbed Friends! Participants are more than welcome to bring their own games.

Thursday, August 15
NORTH BRANCH
Third Thursday Film Fest: A Year of Musicals – 2:00-4:00 pm
Bring a snack and enjoy a movie on the big screen. This month: Moulin Rouge (not rated, 1952)

Friday, Aug. 16 – MCCLURE BRANCH
Enquirer Book Club – 6:00-8:00 pm
Join in a book club discussion! As a bonus, there are always snacks! This month: The Bookish Life of Nina Hill by Abbi Waxman

Saturday, August 17
LAKEVIEW BRANCH
Autism Resource Group – 10:00 am-1:00 pm
Are you a parent with a child or teen with Autism Spectrum Disorder? Join us for resource sharing and support.

Saturday & Sunday, Aug. 17 & 18
LINCOLN BRANCH
Crafts-to-Go: Back to School Crafts – 10:00 am-5:00 pm
Come and make a necklace or a picture frame celebrating going back to school! Children of all ages.

Saturday, August 17
MCCLURE BRANCH
DIY Tie Dye Family Fun – 2:00-4:00 pm
DIY tie dye fun for the whole family! Bring your own white garment anytime between 2:00 and 4:00 pm to create your own unique tie dye creation. While supplies last!
**AUGUST CALENDAR**

**Thursday, August 22**
**NORTH BRANCH**
Sherlock Holmes Story Society – 6:30-7:30 pm
Whether you’ve read the classic Sherlock Holmes stories a million times or not at all, all are welcome to experience The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes in this reading discussion group. Each month, we’ll tackle another short story. This month: “The Adventure of the Six Napoleons.”

**Friday, August 23**
**LINCOLN BRANCH**
Apple for Teacher STEM Challenge – 3:45-4:45 pm
It’s back to school time! We have designed a special STEM challenge where you design a cantilever bridge to stretch an apple as far off a table as possible. Ages 5 to 10.

**Saturday, August 24**
**MAIN LIBRARY**
Once Upon a Time Story Hour – 10:30-11:30 am
Join us for a fairy tale themed story hour complete with activity time as well as craft time. Children are welcome to come dressed in costume, but dressing up is not a requirement to attend. Recommended for ages 3 to 7.

**Saturday, August 24**
**NORTH BRANCH**
Teen Craft: Woven Yarn Bowl – 3:00-3:45 pm
Turn yarn and a paper plate into a one-of-a-kind bowl to hold keys, makeup, or whatever else you need a place for. Ages 11 to 18.

**Sunday, August 25**
**NORTH BRANCH**
Music in the McKenzie Presents: Shawna Caspi – 2:00-4:00 pm
Shawna performs solo, but there is a whole band under her fingertips. A mighty singer, a story sculptor, and a truth teller, she has toured across Canada and the U.S. She believes in poetry and the power of one person and one instrument, accompanying herself with a remarkable lyrical fingerpicking guitar style. A portion of CD sales support The Friends of Peoria Public Library.

**Monday, August 26**
**MCCLURE BRANCH**
Monday Morning Movie Series – 10:30 am-12:30 pm
Enjoy a classic movie with popcorn! This week: The War Wagon with John Wayne (1967)

**Tuesday, August 27**
**LINCOLN BRANCH**
Front & Center: DIY Fluffy Pencil Case – 4:30-5:30 pm
Start out the new school year by making your very own designer pencil case. Choose your favorite color, jewels, stickers or buttons to have the coolest pencil case in your class. Ages 10 to 13.

**Tuesday, August 27**
**LAKEVIEW BRANCH**
Peoria Speaks: Inspiring and Empowering our Community through the Arts – 6:00-7:30 pm
Peoria Speaks is a monthly community discussion program which focuses on topics of interest to Peorians. Funding for Peoria Speaks is being provided by Illinois Humanities through their Illinois Speaks program which is aimed at strengthening the democratic process through community dialogues across the state of Illinois. This month, Jonathan and Nikki Romain will talk about their personal journeys and projects and how they created ART, Inc. (Artists ReEnvisioning Tomorrow), the nonprofit organization they founded to nurture Peoria’s vibrant arts community and guide youth toward a positive and constructive future. The floor will then be open for questions and discussion. Free and open to the public.

**Wednesday, August 28**
**NORTH BRANCH**
Comic Corps Club – 5:00-6:00 pm
Have a love of comics or manga? High school students are encouraged to bring their most recent Image Comics graphic novel to share and discuss with others, but are not required.

**Thursday, August 29**
**MCCLURE BRANCH**
Let’s Move! – 4:00-5:00 pm
August is National Wellness Month, so come to the library for some fun games designed to get you up off the couch and moving! Ages 5-10.

**Thursday, August 29**
**LINCOLN BRANCH**
Adulting 101: More Herbs, Less Salt – 5:00-5:45 pm
Celebrate More Herbs, Less Salt Day with another Adulting 101 Class! We’ll discuss some simple ways to decrease your salt intake while increasing the flavor of food. One participant will get a fresh herb plant to take home!

**Friday, August 30**
**MCCLURE BRANCH**
Trail Mix-athon – 4:30-5:30 pm
August 31 is National Trail Mix Day! Learn about the origins of this snack and make up your own personal blend. All ages welcome while supplies last!
**SEPTEMBER BOOK CLUBS**

Peoria Public Library hosts the following book clubs. If you’d like to start a new one, contact us at 497-2141.

**The Bibliophiles Book Club**
When/Where: Meets the first Tuesday of the month from 1:30-3:30 p.m. at the Lakeview Branch of Peoria Public Library, 1137 W. Lake. For more information, contact Nancy at 309-231-3263 or by email at nancy415@mediacombb.net.

- **September 3:** Sing, Unburied, Sing by Jesmyn Ward

**The Biography/Non-Fiction Book Club**
When/Where: Meets the second Sunday of the month from 3-4:30 p.m. at the North Branch of Peoria Public Library, 3001 W. Grand Parkway. For more information, call Roberta Koscielski at 309-497-2186.

- **September 8:** Tesla: Inventor of the Modern by Richard Munson

**The Book ‘Em Mystery Book Club**
When/Where: Meets the third Sunday of the month from 2-4 p.m. at the Lakeview Branch of Peoria Public Library, 1137 W. Lake. For more information, call 697-2451 or 657-6450.

- **September 15:** Dark Sacred Night by Michael Connelly

**The Read On Book Club**
When/Where: Meets the fourth Tuesday of the month at 5:30 p.m. at the Lincoln Branch of Peoria Public Library, 1312 W. Lincoln Ave. For more information, call 497-2600.

- **September 24:** The Family Business 5: A Family Business Novel by Carl Weber & La Jill Hunt

**The Science Fiction/Fantasy Book Club**
When/Where: Meets on the second Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Lakeview Branch of Peoria Public Library, 1137 W. Lake. For more information, call 497-2701.

- **September 9:** Street Freaks by Terry Brooks

**The YA for Adults Book Club**
When/Where: Meets the third Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Lakeview Branch of Peoria Public Library, 1137 W. Lake. For more information, call Karla at 497-2150.

- **September 3:** An Absolutely Remarkable Thing by Hank Green

**The Sherlock Holmes Story Society**
When/Where: Meets the fourth Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the North Branch of Peoria Public Library, 3001 W. Grand Parkway. For more information, call 497-2701.

- **September 26:** The Adventure of the Three Students

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**HOT NEW TITLES**

**BY ROBIN HELENTHAL**

**Coming in August 2019**

In *The Birthday Girl* by Melissa De La Cruz. Ellie de Florent-Stinson decides to throw herself a grand party for her 40th birthday, but neither she nor her guests seem to be looking forward to it. Ellie grew up as a trail-er park kid in Oregon. Today, she’s a famous fashion designer with three homes, a handsome husband and four children. But her life is not as perfect as it seems: Ellie has a lot of secrets that come to a head at her birthday party. Everyone who has mattered in her life is there and soon it’s a night of twists and surprises.

*Things You Save in a Fire* by Katherine Center. Cassie Hanwell, a female firefighter in a Texas firehouse, loves her job. On her 16th birthday, a decade ago, her mother deserted the family and Cassie’s high school crush broke her heart. Love is for the weak, Cassie decided. She’s worked and trained hard to be a firefighter accepted as one of the boys. When her old flame and mother both reappear, love, forgiveness, courage and vulnerability give Cassie the fight of her life.
August means back to school. So, whether you need a practice test for the SAT or a place to study for it, a free museum pass or a movie, help tracing your family tree or free wifi and a computer so you can do it yourself, the Peoria Public Library has the resources and, more importantly, the trained staff to help you.

As the popular novelist Neil Gaiman likes to say, “Google can bring you 100,000 answers. A librarian can bring you back the right one.”

Peoria Public Library offers peer-reviewed databases, free wifi, public computers, meeting spaces, special programs and, of course, the ability to borrow nearly 950,000 items. With a main library, four branch libraries and a Bookmobile, the Peoria Public Library is one of the largest library systems in Illinois. And at least three branches are open every day of the week.

Below are a few of the lesser known resources available with your Peoria Public Library card. Many can even be accessed from home.

Brainfuse HelpNow – Live tutoring assistance, study guides and practice tests for standardized tests (SAT, ACT, GED and more), a foreign language lab and a writing lab which offers thorough analysis for writing style and organization.

Testing and Education Reference Center – online tool for standardized test preparation, researching undergraduate and graduate programs, finding tuition assistance and career advice.

ABC-CLIO – a multidisciplinary reference resource with more than 140,000 primary and secondary source materials across numerous subject areas – world history to geography to pop culture.

Kanopy – a free streaming service of more than 30,000 films, everything from documentaries and instructional lessons to classics and comedies.

News – With three databases, you can browse today’s local news or access more than 300 major U.S. and international news sources, including the Chicago Tribune, New York Times and Times of London.

Genealogy and Local History – multitude of local history articles and artifacts supplemented by online genealogical research databases with more than 4.4 billion records from the U.S., United Kingdom and other countries.

Recently, I stopped off at a local big box store to check on the price of something and discovered to my delight that school supplies are starting to appear on shelves. Now, while this may sound a little unusual for a grown woman to get this excited about pencils, notebooks and folders, I promise you, I’m not the only genealogist making a wish list like it is Christmas.

Truly, back to school is the best time to stock up on supplies for genealogy. Notebooks for keeping track of information you find, day planners to schedule your genealogy time, pencils, erasers, jump drives, binders, page protectors, printer ink... Oh, dear, my wallet has run for cover.

However, there is one thing every good genealogist should make sure they have on their supply list: a library card. If you live in the city of Peoria, have photo ID and proof of address, you can get your Peoria Public Library card for free. If you live outside of the city, but in another area library district, you can use that library card at just about any library in the area, including Peoria. Just imagine what reference materials and digital sources you can find when using that magic card. A Peoria Public Library card gives you access not only to our online catalog and digital materials, but also some fantastic databases that may hold the clue to your next brick wall in your genealogy research.

Clear some time on your new day planner, bring your freshly sharpened pencils with those new notebooks, and come spend some time at the Peoria Public Library. Who knows what you will discover next when you turn the page.